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AUG 21 1971

FROM : Amembassy, GUATEMALA

DATE: August 20, 1971

SUBJECT : INTERNAL SECURITY: Monthly Report of Incidents, July 1971

REF :

SUMMARY: Press-reported violence this month of a probable political nature--125 incidents including 62 killings--marks the fifth straight month of an extraordinarily high level of such activity (see enclosure -- Monthly Frequency of Political Violence by Region). The current level is over twice the average for the first six months of the Arana regime (July-December, 1970) and over three times the average for the last six months of the Mendez Montenegro regime (January-June, 1970). The overall total of suspected subversive actions--17 percent of July's incidents--remained relatively unchanged from previous months, although insurgent rural incidents, particularly in the San Marcos Department, increased. Security forces were active, but did not conduct any spectacular operations this month. The number of South Coast incidents surpassed the capital's total for the fourth time this year and Eastern Region activity remained high. The courts continued to take action against far left terrorists and the press became more vocal in its criticism of the Government's pacification program, perhaps printing the sharpest attacks yet made during the siege. The deaths of several prominent Guatemalans under circumstances which give few indications of political motivation suggest that wealthy Guatemalans face an increasing threat from common criminal elements in addition to the longstanding dangers they have faced from left-wing terrorists. END SUMMARY

Press Statistics

Newspapers mentioned in July 125 incidents of what looks to be politically-motivated violence. This total included 62 killed, 16 (26%) of which were unidentified and seven of which reportedly bore signs of torture. The professions of the victims, in those few

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cases in which they were identified by the press, included five campesinos, one small landowner, one delinquent, three killed in shoot-outs with the security forces, two associated with the security forces, and one military commissioner. The month's total incidents marks the fifth straight month of an extraordinarily high activity. The level is over twice the average for the first six months of the Arana regime and over three times the average for the last six months of the Mendez Montenegro regime.

Violence Attributable to the Far Left

Left-wing terrorists appear to have participated in six attacks against security forces appearing in the July press, a number somewhat reduced from previous months. The GOG reported a firefight between two clandestine factions July 7 in the capital which was broken up by security forces. [REDACTED] Assailants killed Anacleto OLIVARES, an MLN guard and close friend of Congressional President Mario SANDOVAL Alarcon, in Jutiapa July 24, then ambushed and wounded the Jutiapa police chief and an agent who were in pursuit. There were two other reported attacks against police in Jutiapa; one unidentified assailant and one National Policeman were killed and two more policemen wounded. Terrorists attacked a Peten sawmill on July 25 and in an exchange of gunfire, wounded three Army personnel. And a military policeman (PMA) was badly wounded July 30 in a shootout in San Marcos with unidentified, olive green uniformed men. (B) EC

Left-wing terrorists were probably involved in a number of other incidents. A San Marcos ranch and coffee bean processing plant (beneficio) were burned and partially destroyed on July 5. The MLN party director in a San Marcos Department town reportedly narrowly escaped an assassination attempt in early July. Alleged guerrillas took over a circus playing in a small Escuintla town for several hours on July 18 and played subversive tapes over a loudspeaker system. Men in green uniforms, armed with machineguns, kidnapped an Izabal finquero and two of his employees July 15; all three were later found dead with multiple bullet wounds. And nine homemade bombs, mostly of the propaganda variety, exploded in various departments. Four more bombs were reported dismantled by the security forces. One of these was a sophisticated explosive device found near the Consular Section of the US Embassy on July 30.

Known Security Force Actions

For the first time since last March, security forces did not initiate any spectacular operations against guerrillas. Newspapers did report that unidentified men seized dental intern Juan GONZALEZ Y GONZALEZ on July 12 in the capital. However, after a hue and cry from the University of San Carlos and others, the GOG produced him for a court exhibition on July 16 and ten days later charged him with belonging to a subversive organization. The Government has evidence of his involvement with the far left.

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Actions Attributable to or Suggestive of GOG or Right-Wing Terrorists Involvement

The press this month included accounts of several politically active but not particularly prominent individuals who lost their lives under circumstances which suggest the possibility of the involvement of either Government security forces or right-wing terrorists. David OVANDO Mazariegos, a former Congressman and supporter of ex-President Arbenz, was kidnapped in the Department of San Marcos by machinegun-armed men on July 7, and later found shot to death with his hands and feet tied. On July 17, Coca Cola bottling plant supervisor and FAR member Cesar Humberto BARILLAS Ojeda together with lawyer Fernando LOPEZ Montiel (on whom we have no record of left-wing or any other political activity) were reported to have been kidnapped by unidentified, machinegun-armed men. They were later found dead near a point on the Atlantic Highway. According to the press, their bodies showed signs of having been beaten, tortured, and riddled with bullets.

In addition, ex-alcalde of Barberena, Santa Rosa Department, Guillermo LINARES Farfan (Revolutionary Party) was machinegunned to death by unidentified men in mid-July and Christian Democratic (DCG) activist and Grafico correspondent in Coatepeque, Quezaltenango Department, Benigno REYES, was shot and killed there by unknown men July 9.

Finally, an auxiliary mayor of the Department of Escuintla, appointed by the DCG mayor of that department's capital, was wounded in an armed attack in mid-July.

The Press

Protests over violence and perhaps the sharpest criticism of the Government to date appeared in the July press. Grafico in an editorial on July 24 addressing the death of Lopez Montiel and Barillas, observed that many Guatemalans were approaching the paper to ask for information on a missing relative who probably in most cases is "one of the so many human remains which appear with a notable persistence in every corner of the Republic." The College of Lawyers was more pointed in a paid newspaper announcement printed July 26 which asked the Government to put "an immediate end to the continuing violation of human rights which continue taking place, day after day, despite the constant promises of pacification from the Government and despite the state of emergency imposed on the country which has been totally ineffective." Also, the College of Architects protested the death of Larrave (see below).

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The Courts

Four court cases of some note were reported in various stages of processing during the month. An appellate court upheld the conviction, but suspended the sentence of ex-chief of the judiciales Estuardo GARCIA Gomez who was charged with the possession of a considerable quantity of war materiel found at his home last December 13. According to the press, the GOG formally charged guerrilla Carlos Manuel SOTO Rosales, detained last March 23, for the January assassination of the PMA guarding the British Consulate. The courts also processed the cases of Gonzalez y Gonzalez (see previous paragraph) and Sergio Rene BERTRAND Valencia, accused of killing MLN leader Mario LOPEZ Villatoro in 1968.

And as of July 31, a total of 562 court exhibition requests had been filed for missing Guatemalans since the beginning of the state of siege last November; 50 were released, 98 produced but still detained, 16 others who were found dead, and 398 who are missing.

Violence on the South Coast

The South Coast departments led the capital sector in incidents for the fourth time this year. Armed bands of men continued to operate. Two such groups in early July killed a military commissioner in front of his home in Retalhuleu and in Quezaltenango shot and killed a campesino and his wife, then seriously wounded their six-year-old daughter with a shot through her lung. All told, there were 49 incidents in which 30, including several campesinos and one delinquent, were killed, in each case by an unidentified person or persons.

Eastern Region

Bands of armed men are also being reported in increasing frequency in the Eastern Region. One group reportedly emptied their weapons into a Zacapa citizen in front of his home without saying a word. Other incidents included a Zacapa military commissioner wounded in a July 6 ambush, an Izabal finquero killed in mid-July (see page 2) and a Jalapa justice of the peace wounded July 10. There were 27 incidents in July reported in this region, two-thirds of which occurred in the Departments of Zacapa, Jalapa, and Jutiapa.

Three Prominent Guatemalans Killed but Political Motivation Appears Minimal

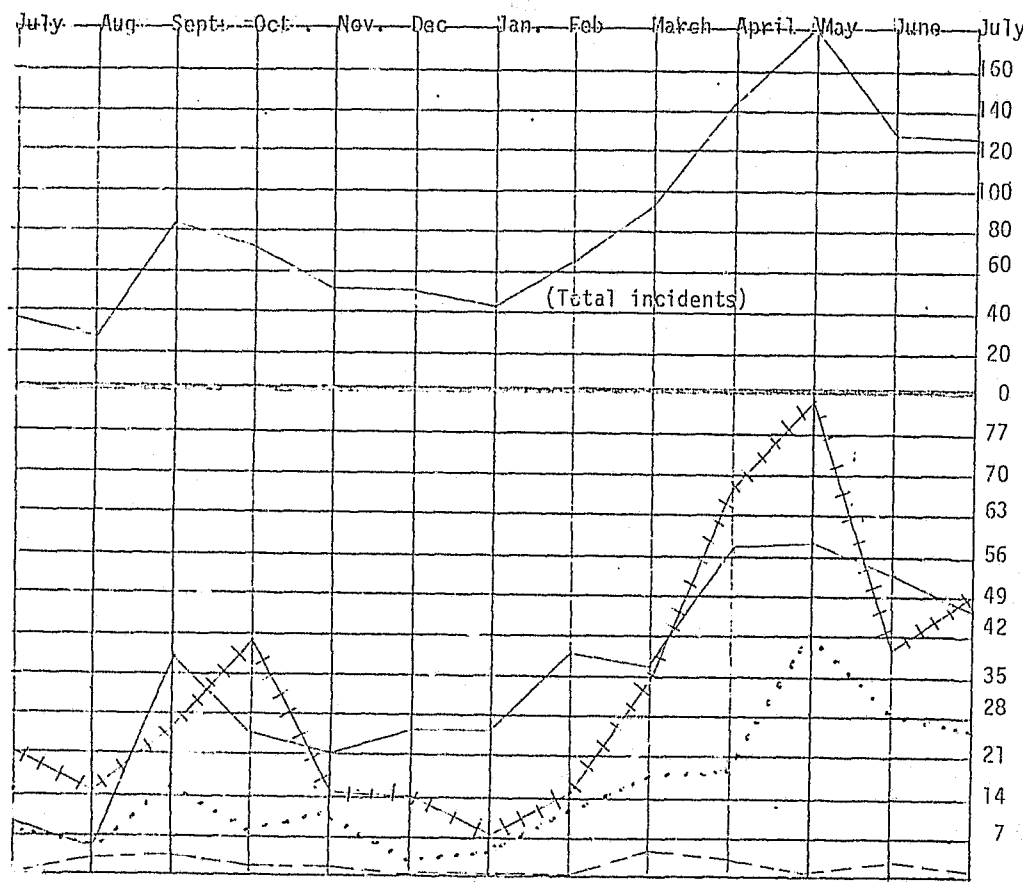
In a three-day period in early July, PR Deputy Jose Luis ARRIAGA Arriola was shot in front of his home by a man dressed as a beggar (July 6), wealthy architect Rene LARRAVE Altenbach was found dead, reportedly badly beaten and strangled (July 8), and wealthy businessman Angel ZARDETTO Batres, according to a National Police report, committed suicide in Antigua (July 8). As is their wont, Guatemalans made numerous conjectures. However, the timing of the deaths appears purely coincidental. In the cases of Arriaga and Zardetto, there are no indications of

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MONTHLY FREQUENCY OF POLITICAL INCIDENTS BY REGION (1) - July 1970 - July 1971



Total - 125

NOTE: Due to the increased press-reported incidents, the scale of the graph has been revised from previous months.

1. For purposes of this graph, acts of violence include shootings, bombings, and deaths, all of which appear to be politically motivated.
2. Capital area (—) - Sacatepequez, Guatemala
3. South Coast (+ + +) - San Marcos, Quezaltenango, Retalhuleu, Suchitepequez, Escuintla, Santa Rosa
4. Eastern Region (....) - Jutiapa, El Progreso, Jalapa, Zacapa, Chiquimula, Izabal, El Peten
5. Highlands (---) Totonicapan, Chimaltenango, Huehuetenango, El Quiche, Baja Verapaz, Alta Verapaz, Solola